

of the official record without prior notice. If you have any questions about CBI or the procedures for claiming CBI, please consult the technical person identified in the "FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT" section.

E. What Should I Consider as I Prepare My Comments for EPA?

We invite you to provide your views on the various options we propose, new approaches we haven't considered, the potential impacts of the various options (including possible unintended consequences), and any data or information that you would like the Agency to consider during the development of the final action. You may find the following suggestions helpful for preparing your comments:

- Explain your views as clearly as possible.
- Describe any assumptions that you used.
- Provide copies of any technical information and/or data you used that support your views.
- If you estimate potential burden or costs, explain how you arrived at the estimate that you provide.
- Provide specific examples to illustrate your concerns.
- Offer alternative ways to improve the document.
- Make sure to submit your comments by the deadline in this notice.
- To ensure proper receipt by EPA, be sure to identify the docket control number assigned to this notice in the subject line on the first page of your response. You may also provide the name, date, and **Federal Register** citation.

II. Background

A. What Action is the Agency Taking?

EPA is representing the United States as the lead Agency in drafting not only the NARAP on Mercury but also other NARAPs on selected persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic substances of concern. The action plans are to incorporate, as appropriate, pollution prevention principles and precautionary approaches in making recommendations to reduce risks associated with these substances.

These action plans reflect a shared commitment by the parties to work cooperatively by building upon international environmental agreements and existing policies and laws; by bringing a regional perspective to international initiatives that are in place or being negotiated with respect to persistent toxic substances; by promoting cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean nations and

with countries that have territories in the high Arctic; and by encouraging mutually consistent trade and environment policies that are conducive to the conservation, protection, and enhancement of the environment in their territories. At the same time, each action plan is unique and recognizes the differentiated responsibilities of each of the countries while taking into account each country's respective natural endowments, climate and geographical conditions, and economic, technological, and infrastructure capabilities.

The action plans reflect a long-term commitment to regional action. The sharing and transfer of information and best practices are seen as important means of enhancing national capacity for the sound management of chemicals. Other important elements and outcomes of these cooperative initiatives include collaboration and cooperation in the measurement, monitoring, modeling, research and assessment of selected persistent and toxic substances in environmental media. Such cooperation will improve the quality, availability, and relevance of the "environmental information" needed to make informed and responsible decisions throughout the implementation of the action plans.

The action plans are also intended to help facilitate the meaningful participation of the public, including nongovernmental organizations; business and industry; native North Americans; provincial, state and municipal governments; academia; and technical and policy experts. Regular public reporting of the progress that has occurred with respect to each action plan will be important to its eventual success.

B. What is the Agency's Authority for Taking This Action?

The NARAP on Mercury is one of a number of such regional undertakings that stem from the NAAEC between the governments of Canada, Mexico, and the United States. As a parallel side agreement to the North American Free Trade Agreement, the NAAEC came into force on January 1, 1994 as an overarching framework for environmental cooperation. The NAAEC established the CEC to "facilitate cooperation on the conservation, protection and enhancement of the environment in their territories." The Council (of Ministers) of the Commission agreed to Resolution 95-05 on the Sound Management of Chemicals on October 13, 1995, at its second regular meeting held in Oaxaca, Mexico. The resolution established "a working group composed of two senior officials

selected by each party whose duties pertain to the regulation or management of toxic substances and who shall work with the CEC to implement the decisions and commitments set out in this resolution." The resolution specifically calls for the development of four regional action plans for selected persistent and toxic substances as a first priority in the parties' common desire to address national and regional concerns associated with the sound management of chemicals. Mercury, as well as dichloro diphenyl trichloroethane (DDT), chlordane, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), is one of the four priority substances identified by the parties for action plan development.

List of Subjects

Environmental protection.

Dated: September 8, 1999.

Stephen L. Johnson,

Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances.

[FR Doc. 99-24167 Filed 9-15-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-F

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

Sunshine Act Meeting

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, September 28, 1999, at 2:00 P.M. (Eastern Time).

PLACE: Training Center in the EEOC Office Building, 1801 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20507.

STATUS: The meeting will be open to the public.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:

1. Announcement of Notation Votes, and
2. EEOC—A Year in Review and a Dialogue for the Future.

Note: Any matters not discussed or concluded may be carried over to a later meeting. (In addition to published notices on EEOC Commission meetings in the **Federal Register**, the Commission also provides a recorded announcement a full week in advance on future Commission meetings). Please telephone (202) 663-7100 (voice) and (202) 663-4074 (TDD) at any time for information on these meetings.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Frances M. Hart, Executive Officer on (202) 663-4070.

Dated: September 14, 1999.

Frances M. Hart,

Executive Officer, Executive Secretariat.

[FR Doc. 99-24307 Filed 9-14-99; 3:52 pm]

BILLING CODE 6750-06-M